

County of San Luis Obispo

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NEWS RELEASE

From the County Office of Emergency Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM SIRENS SUCCESSFULLY TESTED

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, August 23, 2014 -- The full scale test of the San Luis Obispo County Early Warning System sirens took place today, Saturday, August 23, 2014. The sirens were activated twice to test the primary and backup controls for the system. During each test, **all 131** sirens operated successfully and sounded for three minutes. During major emergencies, the sounding of the sirens is an indication that the Emergency Alert System has been activated and the public should tune to a local radio or television station to receive emergency information and instructions.

There are 131 Early Warning System sirens in the San Luis Obispo County Emergency Planning Zone that stretches from northern Nipomo Mesa to Cayucos and east through San Luis Obispo. Approximately 145,000 San Luis Obispo County residents live in the area covered by the sirens. The sirens are one of the public alert systems available to government officials should an emergency take place where protective actions are necessary. The county has other systems available including Reverse 9-1-1, the Emergency Alert System, wireless emergency alerts, and route alerting.

The Reverse 9-1-1 system was also tested in conjunction with the full-scale siren test. The Reverse 9-1-1 system was intended to be activated for the entire Emergency Planning Zone; however the county decided to conclude the test prior to the activation of phones in Protective Action Zones 10 and 12, as doing so would have exceeded the county's preannounced time frame for the test. The Reverse 9-1-1 system automatically includes land-line or conventional phone lines, but cell phones and other web-based phone services need to be registered with the system. For more information on Reverse 9-1-1 or for instructions on how to register visit, www.slocounty.ca.gov/oes/reverse911.

These tests are a critical aspect to ensuring that the systems designed to alert and notify the public of actions they need to take in an emergency are available should the need arise. For more information on public alert and notification systems, visit www.slocounty.ca.gov/oes.

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